



H.R. 1544: Faster and Smarter Funding for First Responders Act

Committee on Homeland Security, Office of Communications
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<http://homeland.house.gov>

Priority assistance to first responders facing greatest risk.

- Terrorists are not arbitrary in selecting their targets; we cannot be arbitrary in protecting our nation.
- First Responder Grant Board will help prioritize grant applications based on threat, vulnerability, and consequences of a terrorist attack.

Streamlined terrorism preparedness grants.

- Instead of waiting until monies are received to begin planning how to spend them, the planning process is moved ahead of the grants.
- Grantees' homeland security plans must be in place before they get taxpayer money.
- Grant applications must fit with the statewide homeland security plans, and specify exactly how the money will be spent.
- States must make grant awards to first responders within 45 days—or face penalties.

9/11 Commission Report:

“Homeland security assistance should be based strictly on an assessment of risks and vulnerabilities... [F]ederal homeland security assistance should not remain a program for general revenue sharing. It should supplement state and local resources based on the risks or vulnerabilities that merit additional support. Congress should not use this money as a pork barrel.”

Specific, flexible, and measurable goals for state and local government terrorism preparedness.

- The Secretary of Homeland Security will develop standards for first responder equipment and training.
- Clear goals for national preparedness will help states and localities avoid wasteful spending, and improve preparedness in specific and measurable ways.

Regional terrorism preparedness grants.

- Not only states but also regions, both intrastate and interstate, may apply for terrorism preparedness grants.
- Regional planning and coordination are encouraged in all grant applications.
- Regional grant requests will be consistent with statewide homeland security plans.

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